

[54] EDITING OF A SUPERBLOCK DATA STRUCTURE

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[57] ABSTRACT

Improvements in an application composite editor for compound documents containing not only text but also graphics and tables facilitate the manipulation of object sets in the formatting algorithm. The editor works with a page layout philosophy wherein data objects reside on the page and data resides in the data objects. All pages reside within a document object, and some data objects may have additional objects within them. Objects are data-specific entities that the user can manipulate on the page. All objects exist within a specified boundary on the page, and this boundary is defined as an object set boundary. Object sets may be moved into positions on the page such that more than one object set is occupying a single displayable area on the page. Such an arrangement of objects creates a structure called a superblock. A superblock is any displayable area containing two or more object sets positioned so that the object sets overlap one another, reside side-by-side or extend above or below one another. A text object set may not be overlapped by any other object set. Although the superblock is itself a complex structure, the creation of this structure by the editor greatly simplifies integration of different data types on the page for the user and allows the user to manipulate a group of object sets within a single displayable area on the page with relative ease. Moreover, formatting of the document is facilitated by the editor since the superblock is treated as an object set without taking into consideration the complexity inside the superblock structure except when a page end decision must be made.

5 Claims, 37 Drawing Figures

